

The Bureau of Missions
Bible House, New York

CHURCH WORK *Among*
SWEDISH AMERICANS



By the REV. G. HAMMARSKÖLD

List of Swedish Clergymen in the United States

1. ALMQUIST, P. A., St. Paul, Minn.
2. ALMFELDT, J. E., Lake Park, Minn.
3. ALFVEGREN, J. V., 544 Canada Street, St. Paul, Minn.
4. ANDREN, A., Rush City, Minn.
5. BLOMQUIST, WM., 1,808 Fifth St., South Minneapolis, Minn.
6. BOODIN, J. E., Grinnell, Iowa.
7. BRUNÉR, ALEX., Moline, Ill.
8. FORSBERG, ERIK, 2,937 Grand Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.
9. HAMMARSKÖLD, G., Yonkers, N. Y.
10. HOLMGREN, HUGO, 107 East 137th St., New York City.
11. KALIN, ALFRED, Adams, North Dakota.
12. KLARÉN, J. H., Shelburne Falls, Mass.
13. LINDSKOG, HERMAN, 97 Sedgwick St., Chicago, Ill.
14. LJUNGGREN, C. J., 33 Harriett St., Providence, R. I.
15. NYBLADH, C. A., Galesburg, Ill.
16. RIETZ, LEWIS, 3 East Superior St., Duluth, Minn.
17. SCHULTZBERG, A. F. Cheboygan, Mich.
18. SUNDELÖF, A. W., 779 Shawmut Ave., Boston, Mass.
19. SJÖSTRÖM, G. L., Chicago (at present in Sweden).
20. TOFFTEEN, O. A., Emmanuel Church, Englewood, Chicago, Ill.
21. TOTTERMANN, K. S., Duluth (at present in Sweden).
22. WALLÉN, K. P., Pawtucket, R. I.
23. WERNER, SCHÜRER, Litchfield, Minn.

Some of these Clergymen minister to both American and Swedish-speaking congregations and all of them have charge of missionary stations in addition to their respective parishes.

Missionary to meet immigrants at Ellis Island, New York, Mrs. OLAF NORD-BLADH, 315 West 40th St., New York City.

Church Work Among Swedish Americans

THE FIRST MISSION—THE PRESENT MOVEMENT—THE PRESENT CONDITION—WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE—TWO IMMEDIATE NEEDS

BY THE REVEREND G. HAMMARSKÖLD

WHEN Pytheas, about three hundred years before the Christian era, wrote the story of his discovery in the far-away North of a great peninsula, inhabited by a sturdy people destined to play an important part in the world's history, all wise men of the age discredited his story and ridiculed his theory. But the story was true, and so was his theory. Centuries later dragon fleets, manned by stalwart vikings, terrorized Europe, and Christian men and women began to pray and work for the evangelization of the North. That the heroic missionary undertaking at last accomplished its purpose in Sweden is in a great measure due to the Anglo-Saxon race. The first Christian

king in Sweden was baptized, in 1008, by the celebrated Englishman St. Sigfried, who also built the first Christian temple and founded the first episcopal see of that country. Other English missionaries, bishops, saints and martyrs, whose names shine like bright stars in Swedish history, followed, and developed the work. Later on there is a period of great progress among the Scandinavian people,

and their bold navigators made long and perilous voyages of discovery to Iceland, Greenland, Labrador, and along the eastern shores of North America. This prepared the way for colonization and missionary enterprises in times to come.

In 1638 the Swedes began to settle on the banks of the Delaware River, and were amongst the foremost in planting

civilization in those regions. Swedish presbyters inaugurated a mission work among the Indians several years before John Eliot and William Penn began their successful ministry among the red men. These colonists built several churches in which services were conducted not only by the clergy officially sent from Sweden, but also by missionaries from the Church of England.



THE REV. G. HAMMARSKÖLD*

When the colony became fully Americanized the Protestant Episcopal Church inherited these old Swedish churches with all the accumulated property, and was thus substantially enriched by the work and sacrifices of the early Swedish settlers.

After the death, in 1831, of the last clergyman sent from Sweden to its old colony, different denominations began



ST. ANSGARIUS'S CHURCH, PROVIDENCE, R. I.
The reredos is a memorial to the late Harold Brown, the donor of the Church

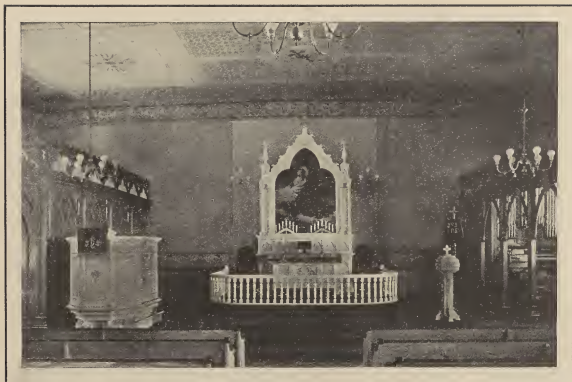
to interest themselves in the Swedish immigrants coming to our shores. The harvest was ripe, and the strong efforts made by various religious bodies have added about two hundred thousand Swedish converts to their respective folds.

Our First Swedish Mission

The first attempt of our Church to minister to Scandinavian immigrants is due to two men of different nationalities and stations in life, but of one mind and purpose. One is the apostolic Kemper, with an acceptable policy of assimilation and union of Swedish and American Churchmen. The other is his faithful Swedish pupil and first graduate of Nashotah Theological Seminary, the Rev. Gustaf Unonius, who, after a short stay among his countrymen in Wisconsin, went to Chicago and organized, in 1849, St. Ansgarius's Swedish Church. Then, as now, a church building was necessary to the success of the work. The people of the congregation could barely maintain themselves, and Mr. Unonius, like his successors in the field, had to ap-

peal to others. The great Swedish singer, Jenny Lind, started the subscription for the building fund with a contribution of \$1,500, and later on Bishop Whitehouse personally aided in raising the funds needed to complete both church and rectory. After nine years of successful work in Chicago, Mr. Unonius returned to his native land. Four years later the Rev. Jacob Bredberg, ordained in the Church of Sweden, was appointed as minister-in-charge of the parish. Bishop Whitehouse recognized the validity of Swedish orders, and without hesitation received Mr. Bredberg, "on his letters of orders and other papers from the Bishop of Skara,"* as priest into the diocese of Illinois. The same liberal policy was characteristic of this venerable prelate in all his dealings with Swedish Churchmen on both sides of the Atlantic. The result was full confidence in the Bishop, and success of the work. During the fifty-three years' existence of St. Ansgarius's Church its clergy have baptized nearly 7,000 persons, prepared over 2,225 candidates for Confirmation,

* Bishop Whitehouse's Tenth Annual Address, p. 21.



ST. ANSGARIUS'S CHURCH, BOSTON

solemnized 5,475 marriages, and officiated at about 5,000 funerals. Of these ministerial acts more than half have been performed by the present rector, the Rev. Herman Lindskog. These figures tell their own story of God's blessing upon a work plainly allotted to our Church by her Divine Head.

The Present Movement

With the exception of the work in Chicago and a few sporadic experiments in the West, our Church hardly made a serious attempt to minister to Swedish-Americans until 1887. In the early spring of that year some Swedish Christians of Providence, R. I., were greatly perplexed by the ecclesiastical bewilderment and unrest of their own people. The remedy these men so earnestly sought for they found in the Chicago-Lambeth platform. This appealed to their sentiment as Swedish Churchmen, because it expressed the position of their mother Church as they understood it. This welcome discovery led to conferences with the Rev. David H. Greer, D.D., who shortly afterwards inaugurated, in connection with Grace Church, Provi-

dence, the first Swedish mission in the East. From the outset it was clear to all concerned that organic unity between Swedish and American Churchmen did not mean *supplanting*, but *supplementing*, not a surrender of the catholic faith, liturgy and usages of the Swedish Church for something new and strange that the people could not understand or appreciate, but a securing of that which Swedish Churchmen in this country especially needed, namely, the historic ministry and Church government.

The people took a deep interest in the work, and, as a result, the mission from the start was entirely self-supporting. This creditable beginning and the steady growth of the work so impressed the late Harold Brown, of Providence, that he, three years later, visited the first minister-in-charge and offered to build a church for the mission on the following conditions: "That the consent of the proper authorities was procured and the canons in relation to new parishes were complied with and a suitable lot, not far from the centre of the city, was bought and paid for, and provided; further, that the new parish shall be dedicated to, and



SOME OF THE SWEDISH CLERGY AT WORK IN THE UNITED STATES

1. H. Holmgren, New York.
2. K. P. Wallén, Pawtucket, R. I.
3. August Andren, Rush City, Minn.
4. J. E. Almfeldt, Lake Park, Minn.
5. Herman Lindskog, Chicago, Ill.
6. J. H. Klaren, Shelburne Falls, Mass.

7. Erik Forsberg, Minneapolis, Minn.
8. A. W. Sundlof, Boston, Mass.
9. L. Rietz, Duluth, Minn.
10. C. A. Nybladh, Galesburg, Ill.
11. J. V. Allvegren, St. Paul, Minn.
12. C. J. Ljunggren, Providence, R. I.

always called after, some Swedish saint or saint connected with the Church in Sweden."

The stipulated conditions were soon complied with, and two years after the above promise was made the new and beautiful St. Ansgarius's Church was consecrated by the Bishop of Rhode Island, who, on that memorable occasion, ordered the Holy Communion to be celebrated in accordance with the liturgy of the Church of Sweden. As American and Swedish Churchmen knelt beside each other to partake of Christ's "most blessed body and blood" the Swedish communicants learned, as never before, the meaning and power of the Saviour's words: "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."

Gradually the work spread out to other Swedish settlements in the dioceses of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Chicago, Quincy, Minnesota, Duluth and North Dakota. In 1887 the Church had but one ordained missionary in active work among the Swedes. Today we have twenty-three clergymen and several students and lay helpers working faithfully and successfully in thirty-four parishes and missions, which are not only developing themselves, but are branching out into new fields. Fifteen of these parishes and missions, located at important centres, have their own church buildings, representing a value of about \$226,000, and four of them have their own rectories. The average number of children baptized by our Swedish clergy is 781 yearly for the last three years. If we stop to consider that the Episcopal Church has been the last of all religious bodies to enter the fields we are now working, and that the work was undertaken in the face of many obstacles, prejudices and misrepresentations of its character and aims, these figures will convince us that there are great opportunities and possibilities for development and expansion of our missionary work among the Swedes.

The results so far obtained are just so many illustrations of the working power of the Chicago-Lambeth platform and the wise policy followed by our bishops having Swedish work within their respective jurisdictions. Supplant this policy with a demand for conformity in ritual and usages, and the work, even at this advanced stage, will collapse and become a failure. But the time will come, and is not far distant, when the very people who now necessarily require a foreign tongue and liturgy for their spiritual life and development will become fully Americanized and ask for the Book of Common Prayer and our Hymnal in English. No one can be brought into contact with our Church for any length of time without growing in that direction. It is the natural development, and we could not stop it even if we would.

The Present Condition

According to the census of 1900 the Scandinavian-speaking population of our country was about 2,230,000. Of these 1,084,580 are designated as Swedes, and the rest as Norwegians, Danes and Swedish-speaking Finns. This number is constantly increasing. During the year ending June 30th, 1901, the immigrants from Sweden alone numbered 23,331. They have settled in all parts of the country and may be counted as loyal and patriotic citizens, who take an active interest in all departments of our national life. Among them may be found men who, like John Ericson, render the country and humanity at large important services.

With few exceptions, the immigrated Swedes have been brought up within their national Church, and all of them have attended the Swedish public schools, which eminent authorities assert to be the best in Europe. In these schools the pupils are daily instructed in the catechism and Bible history, set forth by the Church. After their confirmation they are catechised by the parochial clergy at stated intervals. Consequently they have a good knowledge



EMMANUEL CHURCH, LITCHFIELD, MINNESOTA

of the Christian faith as held and practised by their mother Church.

That more than two-thirds of these well-instructed people to-day remain outside of all religious organizations of our country is evident from the statistics of the different denominations working among them. The reason for this condition cannot be attributed to lack of Christian training and sentiment, for they are not lacking in either.

Why, then, do the great majority of them remain unattached to any organized body of Christians? Because they have looked in vain for the Church of their fathers and its ministrations, and because they do not feel at home in religious bodies whose puritanical discipline is so strikingly different from that of their own Church. Hence their present religious condition, with all its bewilderment, complications and consequences. We and others

may deplore it, but that will not remedy the evil.

What Ought to be Done

The only policy that will change this condition for the better is to give these people the religion of Jesus Christ in a tongue and type already familiar to them. That is what they especially need and desire. Of all American bodies our Church is the only one in a position to offer this policy. But the people must be approached on their

own ground by men who understand their training, temperament and traits of character, and who can win their confidence and affection. Well organized and persistent efforts must be made wherever needed. There are two ways of making such efforts effective. One is for our bishops and parochial clergy to learn enough of the language and peculiarities of the people to meet them



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, GALESBURG, ILLINOIS

on their own ground. The present Bishop of Minnesota has endeared himself to the whole Swedish population by trying this method. At Brewster, N. Y., the rector has brought all Swedes of his community into the Church by employing it. But for several reasons this method of solving the problem will continue to be a rare exception, and therefore inadequate.

The other way is to divide the great field into several districts and appoint experienced Swedish clergymen as general missionaries who may be depended

Church of the American people, we must bring it to *all* of them, foreigners and natives alike. Swedish immigrants are not only a part of the American people, but a part of our own household of faith. We must be prepared to welcome them when they land on our shores, and to carry the Church to their settlements. For this we need men and means. The men suitable for this particular work are already at our service, and new ones are constantly added to their number. But the funds needed for putting the proposed machinery in motion and keep-



ST. ANSGARIUS'S CHURCH, MINNEAPOLIS



ST. ANSGARIUS'S CHURCH, CHICAGO

on to establish and develop missions within their respective districts. At present we have but one such missionary for the whole country, and he plainly realizes that the one great achievement is not to get work done, but to get it *well done*, so that permanent results will grow out of it. If our Swedish work in different parts of our immense country is to be well done, is to be extended and developed in proportion to its needs, the proposed system, or something similar, must be put into operation. This would insure needed unity of action in the different fields and meet the crying need in a most practical way. If we really desire our Church to be the

ing it going must for awhile be provided by the Church at large.

Two Immediate Needs

Our Swedish missions are doing what they can to help themselves, and to aid others. In proportion to their income our Swedish communicants are as liberal in their support of charitable and missionary work as are our American people. Last year one of our Swedish congregations in the East, consisting entirely of ordinary working people, raised, in addition to its running expenses, \$1,800 for necessary improvements of church property, and over \$260



CHOIR AT ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S SWEDISH MISSION, NEW YORK

for missionary and charitable purposes. Not long ago the same congregation sent nearly \$100 to a missionary in a Western field. This obedience to the law of duty and love is practised by most of our Swedish missions, and their readiness to aid others has often been the only source of relief in cases of emergency.

But there are at present especially two immediate needs that cannot be met by these missions. One is the support of a missionary to meet and aid immigrants, especially women and children, when they land on our shores. Through the efforts of a noble woman, now gone to her rest, this work has been carried on for nearly three years past. Unless others undertake to provide the neces-

sary means this most important work must soon be discontinued.

The other immediate need is a church building for our Swedish mission at Duluth, Minn. Bishop Morrison, the missionary and the people have done all they can to help themselves, but the undertaking cannot be accomplished without outside aid. The appeal for this object has the following endorsement of the Board of Managers of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of our Church: "This Board cordially commends the work of the Rev. Mr. Hammar-sköld and endorses his efforts to aid the Bishop of Duluth in the endeavor to secure funds for building a church for Swedes in Duluth." So far the appeals for this object have been made in vain.



CONFIRMATION CLASS AT ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S SWEDISH MISSION, NEW YORK

Statistics

Number of Swedes, according to United States Census of 1900

North Atlantic Division, 217,087; South Atlantic Division, 4,200; North Central Division, 789,811; South Central Division, 15,443; Western Division, 105,173; Alaska and Hawaii, 1,809.

Total number of Swedes, Norwegians, Danes and Swedish-speaking Finns,		2,198,187
Clergymen,		23
Candidates for Holy Orders,		3
Postulants for Holy Orders,		2
Parishes and Missions,		34
Number of persons communing, about,		9,000
Baptisms, yearly average for three years past,		781
Confirmations, yearly average for three years past,		263
Sunday-school scholars, yearly average for three years past,		2,158

Needs of the Work

- Three more General Missionaries to develop the work at important centres.
- The support of a Missionary at Ellis Island, New York City, to meet incoming immigrants.
- More church buildings, especially in the missionary jurisdiction of Duluth.

THIS leaflet may be obtained from the CORRESPONDING SECRETARY, 281 Fourth Avenue NEW YORK, by calling for Leaflet No. 952. ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

DAll contributions for Church Missions among the Swedes should be sent to GEORGE C. THOMAS, Treasurer, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

DTHE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES, 281 Fourth Avenue, NEW YORK. ♦ ♦ ♦

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